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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9853
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 6829
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 7143
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 2461
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 5187
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 6340
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 2884
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RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 4488
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2263
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3446
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFIISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 000178

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2019
TAGS: PREL PGOV MARR PTER UN NP
SUBJECT: NEPAL: PLA RECRUITMENT ONGOING

REF: KATHMANDU 174

Classified By: Ambassador Nancy J. Powell. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

UNMIN Confirms Recruitment Has Begun

¶1. (C) On March 5, UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) Senior Political Advisor Kathy Jones confirmed to Emboff that UNMIN monitors were reporting People's Liberation Army's (PLA) recruitment underway at three of the seven main cantonments, with the greatest amount of activity at the "Fourth Division" cantonment in Nawalparasi district in western Terai. (Note: This is the site where during the PLA anniversary celebration in February Prime Minister Dahal told the PLA that it was now under the Special Committee, and needed to follow the committee's decisions.) According to Nepal Police, the PLA have distributed 1,000 application forms at the Nawalparasi camp. Jones added that UNMIN had also received reports from its monitors that division commanders had told disqualified combatants they would have first priority in the recruitment process.

Prime Minister Downplays Controversy

¶2. (C) Addressing the National Conference of the Nepal Bar Association on March 5, Prime Minister Dahal reportedly stated that the controversies surrounding recruitment by the Nepal Army (NA) and the PLA would be over soon and would not jeopardize the peace process. Dahal claimed that as Maoist party chairman he could not order the PLA commanders to stop the recruitment because the PLA now was under the authority of the government and the Special Committee. The PM, who also chairs the Special Committee, further stated that the Special Committee would meet in the next few days to resolve the issue. Mohammed Habibullah, a Madhesi People's Rights Forum member of the Special Committee, told Emboff March 6 that no one has yet contacted him about scheduling a meeting.

Next Steps

¶3. (C) Post understands that a letter from UNMIN to the Prime Minister restating its opposition to recruitment by the PLA and the NA is forthcoming. The British, French and U.S.

Ambassadors are scheduled to see PM Dahal March 8. (The Russian And Chinese Ambassadors have been invited to participate in the meeting, but have not yet responded.) Draft talking points have been sent to SCA/INS for review.
POWELL